City of Santa Barbara
Community Development Department

Memorandum

DATE: April 28, 2010

TO: Readers of the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines (SFRDG)

FROM: Heather Baker, AICP, Project Planner

SUBJECT: 2010 SFRDG Amendments

Per Council action on April 27, 2010, the following text has been officially amended in the attached guidelines document. Changes listed in Part I of this memo are effective 30 days from adoption, or on June 3rd. Changes listed in Part II of this document are effective immediately. Text deletions are indicated with strikeout. New paragraphs are generally indicated with indented text. New text within existing paragraphs is generally indicated with underlined formatting.

Please be sure to review both Part I and II amendments to ensure project consistency with the amendments. Also, please take special note of the guideline renumbering, starting with existing guideline 18, due to the addition of a new guideline regarding partial basements in the document. The new version of pages 37 through 38 of the document is attached to this memo so that new illustrations can be reviewed.

Part I. Amendments Effective June 3, 2010

Projects that Require Design Review. Update list to reflect roof alteration trigger new ordinance language, new 3.5' front yard fence/wall trigger rather than 6' trigger and proposals for two-uncovered parking spaces trigger.

Part II. Amendments Effective April 27, 2010

A. SFDB 2009 Update Acknowledgements. Inside cover. Add current SFDB Boardmembers and staff-member Tony Boughman, Planning Technician II to the acknowledgements page.

B. Creeks Reference. Page 7-SP Guideline 1 Environmental Setting, insert a new sentence as follows.

> …Projects adjacent to creeks should follow applicable "special area" landscape design guidelines for creeks, water courses and wetlands listed in the Single Family Design Board Guidelines. Native plant preservation is

important on some sites. Additionally, consider potential impacts of new and remodeled structures in the vicinity of historic resources identified by the City.

C. Water Conservation References. Page 7-SP Guideline 1 revision:

1. **Environmental Setting & Landscaping.** Consider the environmental setting and appropriate landscaping in the site planning and structure placement process.

1.1 **Integrate structures and site plan with the environmental setting.** Structures are integrated with the setting when new dwellings and additions look as if they belong on the site,…

1.2 **Comply with landscape standards, codes and guidelines.** Projects are required to comply with applicable city water wise standards and Storm Water Management Program components. Additionally, the SFDB Guidelines contain a chapter of Landscape Design Guidelines which all projects should comply with.

D. Solar Design. Page 7-SP, correct the property line shown on diagram and add north arrow.

E. Parking Aesthetics. Page 12-SP text is revised as follows.

Minimize parking aesthetic impacts along the street.

The location and access to garages, carports or other parking areas can have a great effect on the appearance of a neighborhood.

Driveway Aesthetics

5.1 Consider textured/patterned driveways to compliment architecture and minimize driveway visual impacts.

Garage or Carport Aesthetics

5.2 For new construction, garages should not be the predominant feature of the front elevation.

5.3 Design solutions which locate the garage behind the main residence are preferred, where feasible.

5.4 Garages appear more appropriate on the ground floor of multiple story buildings.

5.5 Underground parking solutions are usually inappropriate along the street front on flat lots.

A smaller garage or carport can leave more square footage for main dwelling unit habitable areas. The on-site parking Zoning Ordinance flexibility provision can help.

5.6 Creative parking solutions that use existing covered parking structures are encouraged. For example, consider one covered and one uncovered parking space if one garage space exists and a new uncovered space can fit behind the main residence.

Uncovered Parking Aesthetics

Some projects may have uncovered parking for guests in addition to the two covered parking spaces required. The Zoning Ordinance also allows uncovered parking as an exception to the two covered parking space requirement in some cases.

5.7 Uncovered parking should be screened from the street and neighbors and placed behind the main house structure when possible. Any screening gates should be compatible with the neighborhood.

5.8 Uncovered parking in front of a house should be screened from the street by topography, structures or landscaping.

5.9 Uncovered parking should be delineated with plant or hardscape landscaping.

5.10 Use appropriate landscape planting to ensure adequate shading of the space.

5.11 On flat sites, new paving for uncovered spaces should be permeable.

Carport Design Guidelines

5.12 Aesthetically, garages are usually preferred over carports.

5.13 Construction over carports is strongly discouraged.

5.14 Carports should be designed with high quality materials, compatible with the main structure. For example, roofing design, colors, materials and supporting posts should be similar to the main house.

5.15 A sloped carport roof is preferred over a flat carport roof if it is compatible with the main house.

5.16 Support posts for a carport should appear substantial and be decoratively finished in a style matching the main residence. Thin metal poles are not an acceptable solution for a carport design.

5.17 Pedestrian pathways connecting the carport with the main residence should be provided.

5.18 Landscape planting areas may be required to be located adjacent to carports to provide visual relief from paved areas, if readily feasible.

5.19 Where there is no garage on a property, at least 200 cubic feet of aesthetically integrated lockable exterior storage should be provided.

F. Covered Elements Guidelines. On page 17-C, there is a new subheading, "Volume, Bulk, Massing and Scale Issues". Page 18-C in the left-hand bulleted list, new text is below.

- **Second Story Decks:** Do wall elements, guardrails, furniture, or outdoor fireplaces contribute to the **bulk** or **scale** of the project?
- **Covered Porches, Loggias, and Covered Decks:** Do the covered porches, loggias, and/or covered decks enhance the building's design,

appearance, and function? Do they contribute to excessive **mass, scale** and **bulk**? Careful consideration should be given to projects that propose greater than 250 square feet of these areas, or when they are greater than 10% of the total net square footage of the structure. Because they include roof structures these areas might easily be enclosed in the future, possibly without design review. Future enclosure of existing covered areas may contribute to unacceptable **size, bulk**, and **scale**, eliminate a desirable architectural feature, or exceed FAR limits.

G. FAR Guidelines Implementation. Page 18-C text addition:

FARs measure and limit a structure's size based on lot size. FARs do not translate to an accurate measure of volume because plate heights and roof slopes for homes vary. However, they are a useful indication of a structure's bulk relative to its site. Architectural features such as covered porches, loggias, and covered decks contribute to the mass and bulk of a building. While they are not included in the FAR, they are considered as part of the project's mass and bulk. FARs provide general parameters of reasonable lot build-out according to lot size. FARs are often used to analyze a proposed project's potential for neighborhood compatibility. Many communities have implemented FARs to better control size, bulk and scale of development. Ideally FARs can help prevent sudden dramatic incompatible neighborhood changes.

Page 20-C table - bold the headings and shade the columns of the 100% of max. and 85% of max.

Page 21-C text insertion after the section "Projects Under 85% of the Maximum FARs are Encouraged" and before the section "Properties Legal-Nonconforming as to a Required Maximum Size".

Applicability of FARs as Guidelines.

Maximum FARs are applied as guidelines rather than requirements on lots that are 15,000 square feet or larger, or located in multi-family or non-residential zones. Site and zoning variables might contribute to less reliability in the use of the 20 closest FAR Study.

Some situations may support higher FARs and projects that approach or exceed guideline FARs might not pose a problem and FAR compatibility may be less critical. Larger lots may allow more space between structures and in some cases may allow the project to be less visible to the public and to neighbors. In multi-family or non-residential zones where density of development is usually higher, single-family residential projects will likely have lower FARs than other types of development. These zones are likely to have more variety of development.

Other situations may support lower FARs. When the buildable portion of a site is small in relationship to the lot size, an FAR lower than what would normally be indicated for the lot size may be more appropriate. On some large lots not all of the lot area may be developable due to steep slopes or creek or ocean bluff setbacks. These site constraints can push development on a site closer to the street, or closer to neighbors. In the Riviera there are examples where development on larger lots is clustered close together around cul-de-sacs or built close to the public streets. The configuration of the lot may reduce its developable area, for example flag lots. Corner lots or other lots with multiple street frontages have increased area within the front setbacks and development on these lots may be more visible. In situations like these, compatibility with neighboring FARs may be more pertinent. As a general rule, where the development is closer to property boundaries or more visible to the public and to neighbors, the proposed FAR should be reduced.

H. 20 Closest Homes Data Use Guidance. Page 21-C new text:

20 Closest FAR Study

When a project proposes to exceed 85% of a maximum required FAR, the applicant must provide a study of the FARs of the 20 closest lots. Using a geographic information system, the 20 closest lots are selected for the project's neighborhood. This information is a tool used by the review board to assist in determining the compatibility of a project's size within its neighborhood. Data on square footages and lot sizes are obtained from the County Assessor's Office or from City records and plan archives. The information is assumed to be approximate due to variations in calculation methods and because many County records reflect original home sizes, but the data allows a general sense of the project's size and FAR compatibility with nearby development. Factors to consider when using the 20 Closest FAR Study include:

- Variability of square footages in the neighborhood
- Variability of lot sizes and FARs in the neighborhood
- Site constraints; how much of the lot area is developable?
- Is the project near the average for the neighborhood?
- Is the project among the largest in the neighborhood?
- The project's volume, bulk, scale, height, and massing relative to its square footage
- Closer proximity to neighboring structures and/or denser development in the neighborhood suggests closer adherence to the size of adjacent structures and to the average size of structures in the study.

I. Glass Materials. Page 31-C text revision:

Glass Material:
16.7 In general, deck-railing materials should be selected to be consistent with the architectural style of the structure. The use of glass railings as guardrails or as windscreens is not the preferred material at highly visible locations due to the possible glare associated with these types of installations. Installations of reflective glass materials will be reviewed to determine if the installation is compatible with the structure and that it does not create significant glare problems. Large "picture" windows that are not broken up with mullions and/or muntins will be reviewed for architectural compatibility and for glare problems.

J. Partial Basement Guideline. See attached two new pages regarding new Partial Basement Guideline 18 and associated illustrations. Please note that the addition of this new guideline, results in all subsequent guidelines in the document to be renumbered.

K. Lighting Guideline Revisions. Text revisions beginning on page 69-N.

38. Lighting Guidelines
Lighting for single family homes is usually proposed for security and decorative reasons, and should be designed in a way that it is not detrimental to neighboring properties. A good lighting plan for a home will provide sufficient light for adequate site security, will use fixtures appropriate for the style of architecture, and will use the least amount of light and energy necessary to meet those objectives. "Night glow," the effect of artificial lights illuminating the night sky and making stars less visible, has become a concern in many neighborhoods. All projects must comply with the City of Santa Barbara's Outdoor Lighting Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 22.75) and Outdoor Lighting and Streetlight Design Guidelines, as well as State energy codes. Following these guidelines will help create an attractive ambience in your neighborhood and allow Santa Barbara's stars to be more visible at night time.

The design of the exterior lighting should not attempt to compensate for low levels of street lighting typical in hillside neighborhoods. Lighting in hillside areas requires special attention and care, as the low ambient light levels can exaggerate the impact of poorly designed lighting.

38.1 Generally. In general, all exterior lighting should be designed, located and lamped in order to prevent or minimize overlighting, energy waste, glare, light trespass, and skyglow.

38.2 Minimize Lighting. Plan carefully to only install lighting where it is needed. Directional lighting and lower intensity lamps can reduce lighting impacts. Indiscriminate flood-lighting of broad areas is unacceptable. Where safety "floodlighting" is proposed for areas such as garage entries, only use lighting activated by motion sensors and directed downward.

38.3 Keep Lighting Low and Close. Light sources for landscape lighting should be near to the ground. Fixtures mounted on the building should relate to a human scale in their size and mounting height. Flood lighting for security, when used, must be aimed close to the building and not create glare for neighbors.

38.4 Consider Distant Views. Light sources must not be objectionable when seen from a distance. Is your property on a hillside visible from other areas? Consider how to place lighting on your site in ways that will minimize visibility from distant locations.

38.5 Driveways. Where possible, design driveways and landscaping so that headlights do not shine onto neighboring properties. Avoid the use of lighting fixtures spaced along the length of a driveway, limiting use and placement to the minimum necessary for safety. Keep in mind the view of this lighting from surrounding areas.

38.6 Walkway Lighting. Along walkways, low-level lighting in the form of bollards or fixtures mounted on short posts are the preferred lighting solution. Fixtures should be located to avoid hazards for pedestrians or vehicles, and should account for growth of landscaping.

38.7 Light Shielding. Where other than low-intensity light sources are used, fixtures must incorporate shielding to prevent objectionable brightness or light trespass. The city's Outdoor Lighting Guidelines contains useful charts of the intensity of different light sources, and when shielding becomes required. Keep in mind that even low-intensity light sources that are shielded, may still be directly visible from downhill neighbors, and considered a nuisance.

38.8 Landscape and Building Lighting. "Up-lighting" of trees and building elements is discouraged, but when used, such lighting must be limited in its use, and fixtures must confine lighting to features being lit through use of shielding, lamps with low intensity and appropriate beam spread, and timers.

38.9 Outdoor Living Areas. Lighting for outdoor living areas such as decks, patios, and swimming pools should be designed to minimize the visibility of the lighting from the surrounding neighborhood. Mounting of floodlights on the building wall and aiming away from the building is not acceptable.

38.10 Prohibited Lighting. Municipal Code Section 22.75.030.A prohibits the use of the following fixtures in all zones:

1. Lighting fixtures mounted in such a way as to illuminate a roof or awning.
2. Lighting fixtures mounted to aim light only toward a property line.
3. Lighting fixtures mounted in a way that is distracting to motorists or that interferes with the safe operation of a

motor vehicle, as may be determined by the City Engineer.

In addition to these ordinance provisions, lighting of architectural features or athletic courts is not appropriate for single family structures.

Also, delete former photo and its caption on page 70-N:

"This exterior lighting fixture features an inset light bulb which ensures lighting is only directed downward."

Revise middle caption for top illustration on page 71-N to delete the word "only".

L. Coastal Bluff Considerations - Good Neighbor Guidelines. Page 72-N, first column, create third sub-bullet:

- Fences and hedges on Coastal bluff properties often follow property lines perpendicular to the shoreline. These fences and hedges should maintain an open and unobstructed feeling in keeping with the ocean front. Consider your views and your neighbors views that occur at oblique angles across one another's properties. Avoid privacy fencing or hedges that extend well beyond the house toward the ocean. Minimize the visibility of fences and hedges from neighboring houses and from the ocean and beach.

M. Fences and Views. Page 72-N, second column, third bullet, add reference to tall fences and walls:

Avoid tall landscaping, fences or walls that interfere with your neighbor's views. Consider the mature plant growth height when selecting plants.

N. Various Supplemental Information Updates

Updated Sample Master Application per new form.

Per ordinance standards established in Zoning Ordinance Amendments, September, 2008.

- Revised Residential Zoning Requirements table, see attached
- Setbacks and Required Yards diagram, see attached
- Tree Removal Requirements, page 86-SI, new text:

Trees on Approved Landscape Plans

Municipal Code 22.11.010 prohibits significant alterations to approved landscape plans and unauthorized tree removal when there are conditions of approval for the development on the lot that require the installation and maintenance of trees in accordance with an approved landscape plan. Such

trees may not be removed without SFDB approval and the required permit.

- Fences, Walls and Hedges "Setbacks" text revisions, page 87-SI. Replace items 1 – 4 with the following next text items 1 – 5.

1. **Setbacks.** Except as hereinafter provided, in the A, E, R, C-O and C-X Zones, no fence, screen wall or hedge located in the setbacks shall exceed a height of 8'.

2. **Front Lot Line, Side of Driveway.** In the A, E, R, C-O and C-X Zones, no fence, screen wall or hedge exceeding a height of 3-½' shall be located:

   a. Within 10' of a front lot line.

   b. Within 10' of either side of a driveway for a distance of 20' back from the front lot line. The height limitation concerning driveways also applies where a driveway on an adjacent property is located within 10' of the junction of any front side lot line.

3. **Corner.** In the A, E, R, C-O, and C-X Zones, no fence, screen wall or hedge located within 50' of a street corner measured from the edge of the vehicular traveled way as determined by the Traffic Engineer and within the required front yard shall exceed a height of 3-½'; provided that where any fence, screen, wall or hedge within 50' of any corner impairs the vision of drivers of vehicles approaching on the intersecting street, the Chief of Building and Zoning may further limit the height of construction by the terms of the permit issued to the applicant so as to prevent such impairment of vision.

4. **Alleys.** The City Traffic Engineer may require the height of a fence, screen, wall or hedge to be reduced if the improvement is determined to be a safety hazard.

O. Glossary of Terms

Delete former "Open Yard Area" definition.

Delete former "Setback" definition and replace with these two items, page 101-SI.

Setback, Front.
An area between the front lot line and a line parallel to the front lot line bounded by the interior lot lines of the lot that are roughly perpendicular to

the front lot line, the depth of such area being the distance required by the Zoning Ordinance.

Setback, Interior.
An area between an interior lot line and a line parallel to the interior lot line bounded by the two lot lines adjacent to the interior lot line from which the setback is measured, the depth of such area being the distance required by the Zoning Ordinance.

Delete former definitions starting with "Yard, Front" through "Yard, Side" definition and replace with the following definition set, page 102-SI.

Yard, Open: A required yard, the purpose of which is to provide usable outdoor living space and/or visual open space.

Yard, Primary Front: A front yard, on a lot with multiple front yards, designated by the property owner and approved by the Community Development Director or the Director's designee as the primary front yard. All other front yards on the lot shall be secondary front yards.

Yard, Remaining Front: The area of the front yard outside the required front setback.

Yard, Secondary Front: Any front yard on a lot with multiple front yards that is not designated as the primary front yard.

Attachments:

- New pages 37-C to 38-C regarding partial basement designs.
- Revised Residential Zoning Requirements table, page 89-SI
- Setbacks and Required Yards diagram, page 90-SI

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